

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3 and 5-19 are presently pending in this application, Claim 1 having been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 3 and 5-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for being indefinite. However, Claims 1, 3 and 5-19 were indicated as including allowable subject matter.

First, Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the courtesy of a personal interview granted on March 30, 2011, and also Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication that Claims 1, 3 and 5-19 include allowable subject matter.

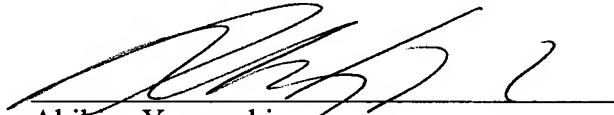
As a result of the discussions held during the interview, Claim 1 has been amended to recite that “the guide is in the form of a segment of a sphere and has a projecting end face positioned on a slanting plane inclined with respect to a vertical inner surface of the closing member such that at least a portion of the refrigerant which passes through the inlet makes contact with the guide and is directed to flow obliquely upward along the guide and into the inlet header.” Accordingly, it is believed that the subject matter recited in amended Claim 1 is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed, and Applicant respectfully request that the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

For the foregoing reasons, Claim 1 is believed to be allowable. Furthermore, since Claims 3 and 5-19 depend directly or indirectly from Claim 1, substantially the same arguments set forth above also apply to these dependent claims. Hence, Claims 3 and 5-19 are believed to be allowable as well.

In light of the prior indication of allowable subject matter and in view of the amendments and discussions presented above, it is believed that no further issues are outstanding and that the present application is in condition for allowance. If, however, the Examiner disagrees, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned who will be happy to work in a joint effort to resolve any remaining issues and expedite the examination of the present application. Applicant respectfully requests an early and favorable action to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, L.L.P.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Akihiro Yamazaki', is written over a horizontal line.

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